

BYLAWS OF THE BURLINGTON PLANNING COMMISSION

(A) Establishment of Bylaws

The Bylaws of the Burlington Planning Commission, hereafter referred to as the "Commission," are hereby established pursuant to 24 V.S.A. S. 4323 (C) and Sec. 2.2.2 of the *Burlington Comprehensive Development Ordinance*. These bylaws shall be effective from the date of adoption, and may be amended from time to time by a two-thirds vote of the Commission.

(B) Membership

In accordance with 24 V.S.A. Chapter 117 and Sec. 120 of the *Burlington City Charter*, the Commission shall consist of seven (7) residents of the City of Burlington appointed by the City Council. Any appointment to the Commission shall be for a term of three (3) consecutive years. Members may be appointed to successive terms without limitation. Any member desiring reappointment, or city resident desiring an appointment to the Commission, must apply to the City Clerk's office and obtain a nomination from a member of the City Council.

(C) Vacancies/Removal

Vacancies shall be filled by the City Council upon the expiration of such term or an unexpired portion of any term. Any member of the Commission may be removed at any time by unanimous vote of the City Council.

(D) Abstentions from Participation and Voting

In order to secure, protect, and preserve the highest level of public trust in the deliberation and decision of the Burlington Planning Commission, it is incumbent upon each member not only to scrupulously avoid any act which constitutes a conflict of interest established in law, but also to avoid any act which gives the appearance of bias, favoritism, or of interest.

- (1) A member shall withdraw from all participation, including all formal and informal discussion and voting, in any deliberation of the Commission or its committees or any issue upon declaration of a conflict of interest or upon the assertion that there is a reasonable public presumption that bias, favoritism, or a conflict of interest may exist. Circumstances under which this provision shall be exercised include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - (a) If the member has a direct or indirect financial interest in the outcome of the matter at issue. A direct financial interest shall include, but not be limited to, circumstances in which the member is an applicant, a provider of professional or business service to the applicant, serves on the board of directors, or receives any form of remuneration or benefit from the applicant. Indirect financial interest shall include, but is not limited to, if an [As amended: November 7, 2002] immediate family relative or close personal friend has, or is likely to have, a direct financial interest in the outcome of the matter; or
 - (b) If the matter at issue involves the member's own official conduct; or
 - (c) If participation in the matter might violate the letter or spirit of a member's code of professional responsibility; or
 - (d) If a member has such close personal ties to the applicant that the member cannot reasonably be expected to exercise sound judgment in the public interest.

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(G) Offices

At the first meeting in July of each year, the Planning Commission shall elect, by majority vote, a Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson from among its members, and shall also elect a Clerk who may or may not be a Commission member or municipal employee. Terms of office shall be for one year. Vacancies in these offices may be filled for the unexpired terms only by majority vote of the Commission.

(H) Committees

1. Standing Committees

There shall be three standing committees of the Planning Commission: Executive, Ordinance, and Long Range Planning. Membership comes from those serving on the Planning Commission, the Development Review Board, the Design Advisory Board and/or Conservation Board. With the exception of the Executive Committee, each standing committee shall be composed of a minimum of three (3) persons with a maximum of five (5) persons, of which three (3) must be members of the Commission. The Commission Chairperson may not serve, as the Committee Chairperson for either the Ordinance Committee or Long Range Planning Committee. Each standing committee shall report on its activities and/or recommendations within its purview to the full Commission for its disposition at each Commission meeting. Except as noted, the establishment of standing committees does not constitute a delegation of any responsibility of the full Commission, which retains the exclusive agency for the City under law and ordinance.

- 1) Executive: The Executive Committee shall be composed of three members consisting of the Commission Chairperson, who shall serve ex-officio as Chairperson of the Committee; the Commission Vice-Chairperson, who shall serve ex-officio as Vice-Chairperson of the Committee; and a Planning Commissioner selected at-large by the Commission at its organizational meeting. The duties and functions of the Committee shall be as follows:
 - i. Appointment of standing committees and ad hoc committees including chairpersons unless noted otherwise herein, and appointment of special liaisons as the Commission shall establish, and oversight of committees and liaisons;
 - ii. Oversight, including preparation of the annual department budget; supervision and the annual review of the department director; such other tasks as the Commission shall assign.
 - iii. Relationship of the department and Commission to city, regional, and state departments and commissions, including scheduling of special work sessions as necessary;
 - iv. Commission bylaw revisions and amendments;
 - v. Oversight of all contracts as the Commission or department shall enter into or be delegated responsibility for;
- 2) Ordinance: The Ordinance Committee shall have at least four (4) and no more than five (5) members. Members may be appointed from the following: one (1) member each from the Development Review Board, the Design Advisory Board, or the Conservation Board, in addition to one (1) member from the Planning Commission Executive Committee, and two (2) at-large of the Planning Commission elected by the Commission at its organizational meeting. The chairs of the Development Review Board, Design Advisory Board or the Conservation Board may appoint a member of their board to serve on the Ordinance Committee. If all boards appoint a member the Planning Commission, by election at its organizational meeting will confirm which appointee(s) will serve on the Ordinance Committee. The Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson of the Ordinance Committee shall be elected by a majority of committee members. The duties and functions of the Committee shall be as follows:

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- i. Preparing and reviewing all revisions of the Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances, Official Map and the Zoning Map;
 - ii. The enforcement of the zoning and subdivision ordinances and the zoning map, and;
 - iii. Such other tasks as the Commission shall assign.
- 3) Long Range Planning: The Long Range Planning Committee shall have at least four (4) and no more than five (5) members including one (1) member from the Development Review Board appointed by the Board's Chairperson. The Committee shall have one member from the Executive Committee, and two (2) at-large members of the Planning Commission elected by the Commission at its organizational meeting. The chair of the Design Advisory Board or the Conservation Board may appoint a member of their board to serve on the Long Range Planning Committee. If both boards appoint a member the Planning Commission will decide which appointee(s) will serve on the Long Range Planning Committee. The Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson of the Long Range Planning Committee shall be elected by a majority of committee members. The duties and functions of the Committee shall be as follows:
- i. The development of an implementation plan for the Municipal Development Plan.
 - ii. Develop a process with a budget for each eight year revision to the Municipal Development Plan;
 - iii. Review plans of other departments and the regional planning commission and provide comments to the Planning Commission; and
 - iv. Such other tasks as the Planning Commission shall assign.

2. Ad hoc Committees and Commission Liaisons:

From time to time ad hoc committees and commission liaisons may be established by the Commission for special assignments that do not fall within the general purview of standing committees.

3. Committee Meetings:

When appropriate, standing committees should have regularly scheduled meeting times. All committee activity should be ratified by vote of the committee before presentation to the Commission. All substantive actions of the committees should be recorded in the written minutes kept current by the committee chairperson or designee. At the request of the committee chairperson, a committee meeting shall be taped.

(I) Annual Work Plans

The Planning Commission and each of the standing committees shall set work plans every year. These work plans shall be reviewed periodically. The schedule for work plans and their evaluation follows:

May: Each standing committee evaluates the extent to which it fulfilled its old work plan and a brief (1-2 page) evaluation report is written and submitted to P.C. in time to be part of the packet for the first P.C. meeting in June.

June: Standing committee work plans are evaluated by the P.C. at the first meeting. Feedback for recognition, encouragement and improvement is provided.

Standing committee work plans end at the end of the month.

The work plan for the following year (July – June) is written during June and early July. It is submitted to P.C. in time to be part of the packet for the first P.C. meeting in July.

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July: New work plans are discussed, modified if necessary, and approved by the P.C. at the first meeting of the P.C. New work plans begin in July and run through June.

(J) Powers and Duties

In accordance with 24 V.S.A. Chapter 117, and the *Burlington Code of Ordinances*, the Burlington Planning Commission:

- (1) Shall prepare a Municipal Development Plan and amendment thereof for consideration by the City Council and to review any amendments thereof initiated by others as set forth in 24 V.S.A. 4384;
- (2) Shall prepare and present to the City Council, from time to time, proposed bylaws and make recommendations to the City Council on proposed amendments to such bylaws;
- (3) Shall undertake studies and make recommendations on matters of land development, urban renewal, transportation, economy, and social development, urban beautification and design improvements, historic and scenic preservation, the conservation of energy, and the development of renewable energy resources;
- (4) Shall prepare and present to the City Council recommended construction specifications for streets and related public improvements pertaining to subdivision development;
- (5) Shall prepare and present to the City Council a recommended annual capital budget and future capital programs for a period of not less than five (5) years;
- (6) Shall hold public meetings;
- (7) Shall undertake comprehensive planning, which may include related preliminary planning and engineering studies;
- (8) Shall prepare and present to the City Council, from time to time, recommended fees for the administration of zoning and subdivision regulations;
- (9) Perform such other acts or functions as it may deem necessary or appropriate to fulfill the duties and obligations imposed by, and consistent with, the intent and purpose of 24 V.S.A. Chapter 117 and the *Burlington Code of Ordinances*.
- (10) May require from other departments and agencies of the City such available information as it relates to the work of the Planning Commission;
- (11) May, in the performance of its functions, enter upon land to make examinations and surveys;
- (12) May participate in a regional planning program;
- (13) May retain staff and consultant assistance in carrying out its duties and powers.

(K) Meetings/Minutes

Meetings of the Planning Commission shall be held at the call of the Chairperson on the second and fourth

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Tuesday of each month unless otherwise determined by majority vote of the Commission. The Chairperson may also call special meetings of the Commission. All meetings of the Commission shall be open to the public, except as provided by law. The Commission shall keep minutes of every regular or special meeting. The minutes shall include, but not be limited to, the names of the persons appearing and addressing the Commission, any action taken by the Commission, the findings, if any, made by the Commission and reasons thereof. The minutes shall, thereafter, be made available for public inspection during normal business hours at the office of the Administrative Officer. Any interested party shall have the right to a reproduction of the minutes in an amount sufficient to cover the costs of such reproduction.

(L) Notice

No regular or special meeting of the Commission shall be held without providing at least twenty-four (24) hours written notice to the City Clerk. Public hearings shall require no less than fifteen (15) days prior notice including advertising in a newspaper of general publication within the City and posting on the City Hall community board(s).

(M) Quorum

For the conduct of any meeting or hearing and the taking of any action, a quorum shall be no less than a majority of the members of the Commission and any action thereof shall be taken by a majority of the members of the Commission.

(N) Public Hearing

Prior to Planning Commission action on the adoption of any amendment to the City's Zoning Ordinance, Subdivision Regulation, Official Map, or Municipal Development Plan, a public hearing shall be held by the Planning Commission after public notice.

(O) Ex-Officio Member

The Mayor of the City of Burlington shall be a non-voting ex-officio member of the Commission.

(P) Special Meetings

Special meetings of the Commission may be called by the Chairperson, when he or she deems it expedient, or upon the request of two (2) members of the Commission for the purpose of transacting any business designated in the call. Notice to each member of the Commission for a Special Meeting may be by telephone or otherwise at least twenty-four (24) hours prior to the date of such special meeting. At such special meeting, no business shall be considered other than specified in the call. Additionally, if more than three (3) members of the Commission participate in a meeting with staff, conduct a site visit, or participate in other activities related to the responsibilities of the Planning Commission outside of a regular meeting, the gathering must be warned as a special meeting with proper notice given.

(Q) Governance Procedures

Robert's Rules of Order, as revised, shall govern proceedings of the Commission in all cases which are not specifically covered by other laws, ordinances, bylaws, or regulations.

History:

Established: June 26, 1986

Amended: October 10, 1991

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Amended: February 12, 1998

Amended: May 10, 2001

Amended: November 7, 2002

Amended: October 14, 2003

Amended: July 10, 2008

Amended: October 12, 2016